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<u>Amendments to the Claims</u>:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the

application:

<u>Listing of Claims</u>:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics to an associated plurality of nodes in a communication network, one or more requests of said plurality of requests being associated with an individual node of said associated plurality of nodes and each of said associated plurality of nodes having one or more node attributes, said method comprising <u>steps of</u>:

<u>defining for each node of said associated plurality of nodes a translated value related to a value of a selected node attribute of said one or more node attributes of each of said associated plurality of nodes,</u>

<u>after all translated values of said associated plurality of nodes are defined,</u> defining a sequence for sending said plurality of requests to be sent to said associated plurality of nodes, said sequence based on [[a]] <u>said</u> value of [[a]] <u>said</u> selected node attribute <u>and a ranking of said all translated values</u> ~~of said one or more node attributes of each of said associated plurality of nodes~~; and

initiating each of said plurality of requests according to said sequence.

Claim 2. (Cancelled)

Claim 3. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said <u>step of</u> defining said sequence comprises selecting two or more of said node attributes and for each of said two or more of said node attributes, refining ranking of said associated plurality of nodes based on said value of said each of said two or more of said node attributes.

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Claim 4. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1,

said method further comprising steps of:

      receiving data regarding a plurality of responses from said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests; and

      tracking a number of outstanding requests in a segment of said network, said segment associated with said associated plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests relating to a number of said plurality of requests in said segment for which responses have not been received, said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper bound number;

      and

wherein said step of initiating each of said plurality of requests comprises comparing said number of outstanding requests in said segment with said upper bound number and initiating one request of said plurality of requests when said number of outstanding requests in said segment is less than said upper bound number.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1,

said method further comprising steps of:

      receiving data regarding a plurality of responses from each of said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests; and

      tracking a number of outstanding requests for said each of said associated plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests for said each of said associated plurality of nodes relating to a number of said plurality of requests for said each of said associated plurality of nodes for which responses have not been received, each said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper bound number;

      and

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wherein for each of said associated plurality of nodes, said <u>step of</u> initiating each of said plurality of requests when said number of said outstanding requests is less than said upper bound number, said each of said plurality of requests being sent independently to said each of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 6. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 5, wherein said upper bound number for said each of said associated plurality of nodes is separately defined for said each of said associated plurality of nodes in said segment.

Claim 7. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

said value of said selected node attribute comprises a value representing a number of said plurality of requests to be initiated for each of said associated plurality of nodes in a time interval; and

said <u>step of</u> defining said sequence ranks said associated plurality of nodes in descending order utilizing each of said values of said selected node attribute of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 8. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

said selected node attribute is a response time of each of said associated plurality of nodes to previous requests of said plurality of requests; and

said <u>step of</u> defining said sequence ranks said associated plurality of nodes in descending order utilizing each of said values of said selected node attribute of said associated plurality of nodes.

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Claim 9. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

> said selected node attribute identifies an operating characteristic of each of said associated plurality of nodes; and

> said step of defining said sequence ranks said associated plurality of nodes in a predetermined order utilizing each of said values of said selected node attribute of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 9, wherein:

> said operating characteristic indicates wireless and non-wireless transmission technologies associated with said each of said associated plurality of nodes; and

> said step of defining said sequence ranks said associated plurality of nodes utilizing values of said operating characteristic, ranking nodes of said associated plurality of nodes having wireless transmission technologies with a higher priority.

Claim 11. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said method is embodied in a computer program.

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said method is repeated in a cyclic time interval.

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of defining an order for sending a plurality of requests for statistics as claimed in Claim 4,

wherein said method further comprises a step of comprising:

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tracking a second number of other outstanding requests for said each of said associated
plurality of nodes, said second number of other outstanding requests for said each of said
associated plurality of nodes relating to a number of said plurality of requests for said
each of said associated plurality of nodes for which responses have not been received,
each said second number of other outstanding requests associated with a nodal upper
bound number; and

wherein said step of initiating each of said plurality of requests is performed when said number
of said outstanding requests for said segment is less than said upper bound number and said
second number of other outstanding requests is less than said nodal upper bound number for said
individual node associated with said each of said plurality of requests.

Claim 14. (Currently Amended) A statistics collection unit associated with a communication
network, said communication network comprising a plurality of nodes and each of said nodes
having one or more node attributes, said statistics collection unit comprising:

a computer; and

a program executed on said computer, said program comprising:

a sequencing module defining a sequence for sending a plurality of requests for
statistics to be sent to an associated plurality of nodes of said plurality of nodes,
one or more requests of said plurality of requests being associated with an
individual node of said associated plurality of nodes, said sequence based on a
value of a selected node attribute of said one or more node attributes of each of
said associated plurality of nodes; ~~and~~

an initiating module initiating each of said plurality of requests according to said
sequence [[.]] ; and

a translation module defining for each node of said associated plurality of nodes a
translated value related to said value of said selected node attribute prior to
definition of said sequence by said sequencing module.

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wherein said sequencing module utilizes a ranking of all translated values of said associated plurality of nodes to define said sequence.

Claim 15. (Cancelled)

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 14, wherein said defining said sequence in said sequencing module defines said sequence by comprises selecting two or more of said node attributes and for each of said two or more of said node attributes, and refining said ranking of said associated plurality of nodes based on said value of said each of said two or more of said node attributes.

Claim 17. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 14, wherein:

   said program further comprises:

         a receiving module receiving data regarding a plurality of responses from said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests; and
         a tracking module tracking a number of outstanding requests in a segment of said communication network, said segment comprising said associated plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests relating to a number of said plurality of requests in said segment for which responses have not been received, said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper bound number;

         and

   said initiating module initiates each of said plurality of requests by comparing said number of outstanding requests in said segment with said upper bound number and initiating one request of said plurality of requests when said number of outstanding requests in said segment is less than said upper bound number.

Claim 18. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 14, wherein:

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said program further comprises:

a receiving module receiving data regarding a plurality of responses from each of
said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests; and
a tracking module tracking a number of outstanding requests for said each of said
associated plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests for said each of
said associated plurality of nodes relating to a number of said plurality of requests
for said each of said associated plurality of nodes for which responses have not
been received, each said number of said outstanding requests associated with an
upper bound number; and

for each of said associated plurality of nodes, said initiation module initiates each of said
plurality of requests when said number of said outstanding requests is less than said upper
bound number, said each of said plurality of requests being sent independently to said
each of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 19. (Cancelled)

Claim 20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit ~~as claimed in
Claim 19,~~ in a communication network, said apparatus comprising:

a device defining a sequence for sending a plurality of requests for statistics to be sent
from said statistics collection unit to an associated plurality of nodes of said plurality of
nodes in said segment,

wherein for said device

one or more requests of said plurality of requests is associated with an individual node of
said associated plurality of nodes;

each of said associated plurality of nodes has one or more node attributes;

said sequence is based on a ranking of said associated plurality of nodes based on a value
of a selected node attribute of said one or more node attributes of each of said associated
plurality of nodes; and

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said device initiates each of said plurality of requests according to said sequence.

Claim 21. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

said device defines for each node of said associated plurality of nodes a translated value related to said value of said selected node attribute prior to said defining said sequence; and

said ~~sequence is based on a~~ ranking is based on [[of]] all of said translated values.

Claim 22. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein for said device said defining said sequence comprises selecting two or more of said node attributes and for each of said two or more of said node attributes, refining said ranking of said associated plurality of nodes based on said value of said each of said two or more of said node attributes.

Claim 23. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein said device:

receives data regarding a plurality of responses from said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests;

tracks a number of outstanding requests in a segment of said network, said segment comprising said associated plurality of said nodes, said number of outstanding requests relating to a number of said plurality of requests in said segment for which responses have not been received, said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper bound number; and

initiates each of said plurality of requests by comparing said number of outstanding requests in said segment with said upper bound number and initiating one request of said plurality of requests when said number of outstanding requests in said segment is less than said upper bound number.

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Claim 24. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein said device:

> receives data regarding a plurality of responses from each of said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests;

> tracks a number of outstanding requests for said each of said associated plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests for said each of said associated plurality of nodes relating to a number of said plurality of requests for said each of said associated plurality of nodes for which responses have not been received, each said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper bound number; and

> for each of said associated plurality of nodes, initiates each of said plurality of requests when said number of outstanding requests is less than said upper bound number, said each of said plurality of requests being sent independently to said each of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 25. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 24, wherein said upper bound number for said each of said associated plurality of nodes is separately defined for said each of said associated plurality of nodes in said segment.

Claim 26. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

> said selected node attribute comprises a value representing a number of said plurality of requests to be initiated for each of said associated plurality of nodes in a time interval; and

> said device defines defining said sequence by ranking ranks said associated plurality of nodes in descending order utilizing each of said value of said selected node attribute of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 27. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

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said selected node attribute is a response time of each of said individual nodes to previous requests of said plurality of requests; and

said <u>device defines</u> <s>defining</s> said sequence <u>by ranking</u> <s>ranks</s> said associated plurality of nodes in descending order utilizing each of said value of said selected node attribute of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 28. (Currently Amended) [[An]] <u>The</u> apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 20, wherein:

said selected node attribute identifies an operating characteristic of each of said · associated plurality of nodes; and

said <u>device defines</u> <s>defining</s> said sequence <u>by ranking</u> <s>ranks</s> said associated plurality of nodes in a predetermined order utilizing each of said value of said selected node attribute of said associated plurality of nodes.

Claim 29. (Currently Amended) [[An]] <u>The</u> apparatus for use in a statistics collection unit as claimed in Claim 28, wherein:

said operating characteristic indicates wireless and non-wireless transmission technologies associated with said each of said associated plurality of nodes; and

said <u>device defines</u> <s>defining</s> said sequence <u>by ranking</u> <s>ranks</s> said associated plurality of nodes utilizing values of said operating characteristic, ranking nodes of said associated plurality of nodes having wireless transmission technologies with a higher priority.

Claim 30. (Currently Amended) A computer executable program for use on a communication network, said communication network comprising a plurality of nodes, said computer executable program executing the steps of:

defining a sequence for sending a plurality of requests for statistics to an associated plurality of said nodes of said plurality of nodes <u>by selecting two or more of said node attributes and for each of said two or more of said node attributes and ranking said associated plurality of nodes based on said value of said each of said two or more of said</u>

node attributes, one or more requests of said plurality of requests being associated with an individual node of said associated plurality of nodes and each of said associated plurality of nodes having one or more node attributes, said sequence being based on a value of a selected node attribute of said one or more node attributes of each of said associated plurality of nodes; and

initiating each of said plurality of requests according to said sequence.

Claim 31. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The computer executable program as claimed in Claim 30, said computer executable program further executing the step of defining for each node of said associated plurality of nodes a translated value related to said value of said selected node attribute prior to said defining said sequence and wherein said sequence is based on a ranking of all of said translated values.

Claim 32 (Cancelled)

Claim 33. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The computer executable program as claimed in Claim 30, wherein

said computer executable program further executing the steps of

receiving data regarding a plurality of responses from said associated plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests; and

tracking a number of outstanding requests in a segment of said communication network, said segment comprising said associated plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests relating to a number of said plurality of requests in said segment for which responses have not been received, said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper bound number;

and

said initiating each of said plurality of requests comprises is initiated by comparing said number of outstanding requests in said segment with said upper bound number and

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initiating one request of said plurality of requests when said number of outstanding
requests in said segment is less than said upper bound number.

Claim 34. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The computer executable program as claimed in Claim 30,
wherein

said computer executable program further executing the steps of

receiving data regarding a plurality of responses from each of said associated
plurality of nodes which received said plurality of requests; and
tracking a number of outstanding requests for said each of said associated
plurality of nodes, said number of outstanding requests for said each of said
associated plurality of nodes relating to a number of said plurality of requests for
said each of said associated plurality of nodes for which responses have not been
received, each said number of said outstanding requests associated with an upper
bound number; and

for each of said associated plurality of nodes, said initiating each of said plurality of
requests is initiated when said number of outstanding requests is less than said upper
bound number, said each of said plurality of requests being sent independently to said
each of said associated plurality of nodes.